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State Dept. review completed

PRE-GENEVA CONFERENCE DEVELOPMENTS - VIII

ARMY review(s) completed.

Recent indications of Soviet tactics at Geneva: The Soviet Union gave further indications last week that it will attempt to convert the Geneva parley into a forum for promoting Communist China's claim to great power status and to secure wider international recognition for North Korea and Viet Minh, and possibly the puppet regimes in Cambodia and Laos.

As part of Moscow's continuous effort to enhance Peiping's international status, the Soviet delegation at Geneva may seek five-power discussion of measures for reducing tensions. This was suggested by the approaches of two Soviet officials attempting to discover possible areas of disagreement between the United States and Britain on widening the Geneva talks. The Soviet diplomats suggested to Ambassador Bohlen and to British Foreign Office officials that the discussions should not be confined to Korea and to Indochina but should be extended to the consideration of general questions.

On the Indochina phase, of the conference, Moscow and Peiping seem convinced that the Viet Minh's political strength and military initiative, plus France's desire for a truce, will enable the Communists to exact a high price for ending the war. The Communist powers' confidence in their strength in Indochina was reflected in recent remarks by the First Secretary of the Soviet Embassy in London, who, in talks with British officials, likened Indochina to Korea and observed that if partition is to be the solution in Korea, the same solution might be applied to Indochina. Since Soviet officials had previously drawn an analogy between Korea and Germany, the extension of this analogy to Indochina suggests that Moscow and Peiping will not sacrifice Viet Minh interests to achieve strategic interests, but will do everything possible to strengthen Ho Chi Minh's regime.

Another possible Communist maneuver at Geneva was suggested by publication in the Soviet and Chinese press of a statement by the "foreign minister of the national resistance government of Khmer" (Cambodia) protesting American intervention in Cambodia. The Chinese Communist press has asserted that the "Khmer people's forces" now control one-third of

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Cambodia's territory while Peiping and Moscow propaganda has stated that nearly one-half of the territory and one-third of the population of Laos has been "liberated by people's forces."

These assertions may foreshadow Communist demands for the participation of ready-made Cambodian and Laotian Communist governments at Geneva in addition to the "Democratic Government of Vietnam." Such a plan might be aimed either at countering a French proposal to invite the Associated States or at supporting a proposal for creation of coalition governments in each of these three states.

Soviet propaganda continues to avoid any impression that the Geneva parley is in fact the political conference stipulated in the Korean truce agreement. Pravda on 28 March accused Ambassador Lodge of misrepresenting the nature of the Geneva talks, criticizing in particular his statement that the conference was "in effect the political conference called for by the armistice and the UN resolution." The paper said Lodge's attempt to create the impression that North Korea, China and the USSR are to appear at Geneva "as defendants" while the United States and its allies will play the role of prosecutors is an attempt to "turn Geneva into another Panmunjom to prevent the settlement of pressing international issues."

Vietnamese premier hedges on Geneva attendance: Premier Buu Loc said on 30 March that he was unalterably opposed to a Vietnamese Delegation sitting down at the conference table with a Viet Minh Delegation, thereby extending to the latter a sort of political recognition. He then qualified his objection to Vietnamese representation at Geneva by saying that unforeseen developments might make it necessary or advisable for Vietnam to send a delegation to Geneva, if invited to do so.

Indonesia desires to attend Geneva conference: In commenting on the Geneva conference, the Secretary General of the Indonesian delegation to the UN confirmed his government's desire to participate in the discussions regarding Indochina. He stated that it would be unrealistic to seek a settlement without considering the views of Ho Chi Minh and the Viet Minh.

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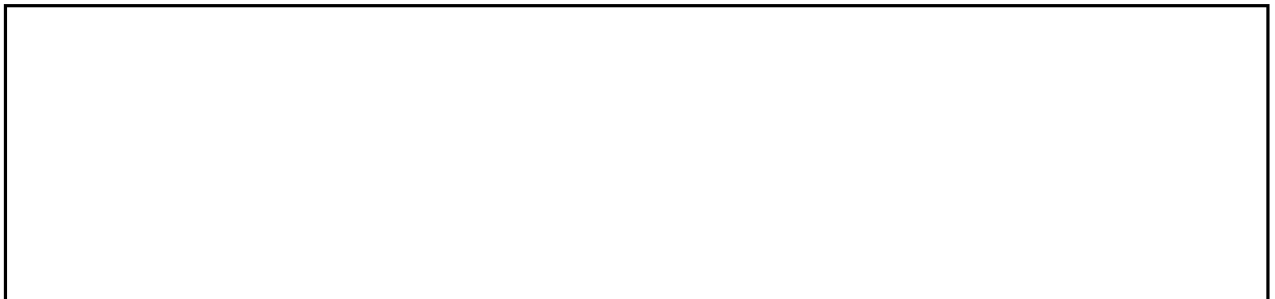
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South Korea continues delaying tactics on Geneva conference:
The South Korean government is continuing to use delaying tactics to seek additional commitments from the United States. This was demonstrated again on 30 March when Foreign Minister Pyun, while denying he was "necessarily" laying down conditions for South Korean attendance at Geneva, insisted that the United States equip three new South Korean divisions for every American division withdrawn.

There are increasing indications, however, that none of the objections to Geneva raised by South Korea will prevent participation. A Seoul paper reported on 25 March that the government has selected a 13-man delegation, headed by Pyun, for the talks, but will delay announcing its decision until just prior to the conference. Pyun's 23 March letter to Secretary Dulles was more moderate than earlier ones, and on 30 March he stated his government was "mentally ready" to go. President Rhee told General Partridge on 30 March that Seoul was "not planning to boycott" the conference.



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